

THE
First Principles
OF THE
Oracles of GOD.
Collected

By *Thomas Shepard*,

Formerly of Emanuel College in Cambridge in England:
afterward Minister of Cambridge in New-England.

*For when for the time ye ought to be Teachers, ye have
need that one teach you again, which be the first
Principles of the Oracles of God; and are become
such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.
Heb. v. 12.*

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To the Christian Reader.

I*T is no disparagement at all, for this wise Master-Builder, Mr. Shepard of New England, to labour sometimes by the Hammer of the Word, to fasten these nails of Truth in a sure place, even in the heads and hearts of Infant-Christians.*

Neither is it below the highest Scholar in Christ's School, to hold fast the form of wholesome words. 2 Tim. 1. 13.

The great Apostle himself, (who was rapt up into the third Heaven) although he had received a commission of Christ his Master to make Disciples, yet he was a Disciple still; for he not only Catechised others, but learned, and that again, and again, The first Principles of the Oracles of God, Heb. 5. 12. which are called The Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, Mat. 13. 11. and The depths of God: Τα Βατھے του Θεου, 1 Cor. 2. 10. that is in plain English, those Doctrinal Truths, which are truly Fundamental, and absolutely necessary unto salvation; that we

To the Christian Reader,

we may be able by sound Doctrine both to Exhort and Convince the Gain-sayers, Tit. 1. 9. and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh us a reason, of the hope that is in us. 1 Pet. 3. 15.

Thus heartily beseeching thee, in the Name of Christ, to search the Scriptures, John 5. 39. and to give thy self continually to Prayer, and the Ministry of the Word ; Acts 6. 4. that you may grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our LORD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, 2 Pet. 3. 18. I now commend you to GOD, and to the Word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are Sanctified, Acts 20. 32. So be it.

Friend, I am thine, if thou doest love the Truth and our LORD JESUS CHRIST in sincerity.

William Adderley.

Dated, From *Charterhouse*
in *London*, February 1.

1 6 4 7.



T H E

Sum of Christian Religion:
In Way of Question and Answer.

Delivered

By Mr. *Thomas Shepard*.

OF NEW-ENGLAND.

Question.

WHAT is the best and last end of Man?

A. To live to God. *Rom. 6. 10,*

11. Gal. 3. 19. 2. Cor. 5. 3, 15.

Q. How is Man to live unto God?

A. Two ways.

First, By Faith in God. *Psal. 37. 3.*

Secondly, By observance of God. *Eccles.*

12. 13.

Q. What is Faith in God?

A. It is the first act of our spiritual life, whereby the soul believing God, believeth in God, and there resteth as in the only Author and Principle of life.

life. *Heb.* 10. 38. *John* 3. 33, 36. *Rom.* 4. 3.
Heb. 11. 13. *Heb.* 4. 3. *Deut.* 30. 20.

Q. What is God?

A. God only knoweth himself, no man can so know him and live: Yet he hath manifested himself unto us in his *back-parts*, according to our manner or measure of knowing things: and we need know no more than these, that we may live. *1 Tim.* 6. 16. *Exod.* 33. 19, 23.

Q. What are God's back-parts?

A. They are two, *First*: His Sufficiency. *Psal.* 36. 9. *Secondly*, His Efficiency. *Rom.* 4. 21.

Q. What is God's Sufficiency?

A. It is his perfect fulness of all good, whereby he is all-sufficient for us in himself. *Psal.* 16. 11. *Gen.* 17. 1.

Q. Wherein stands and appears GOD's Sufficiency?

A. *First*, in his Essence, *Psal.* 68. 19.

Secondly, In his Subsistence or persons, *2 Sam.* 7. 20, 25.

Q. What is God's Essence?

A. Whereby he is that absolute first being, *Rev.* 1. 8. *Isa.* 44. 6. *Exod.* 3. 14.

Q. Can you sufficiently conceive of the Glory of this one most pure essence, by one act of Faith?

A. No, and therefore the Lord hath manifested it unto us by diverse Attributes, *Deut.* 29. 29. *Exod.* 34. 6, 7.

Q. What are God's Attributes?

A. That one most pure Essence, diversly apprehend of us, as it is diversly made known unto us. *1 Joh.* 4. 16. *Isa.* 43. 25. *Q.*

Q. How many kinds of Attributes are there?

A. There are two sorts of them.

First, Some shewing what God is :

Secondly, Some shewing who God is.

Q. By what Attributes know you what God is?

A. By these, God is a spirit living of himself.

John 4. 24. John 5. 26.

Q. By what Attributes do you understand who GOD is?

A. By his Essential properties, which shew to us : First How great a God he is. Psal. 77. 13. Secondly, What a manner of God he is. Matt. 6. 17.

Q. What Attributes shew how great a GOD he is?

A. First his Infiniteness, whereby he is without all limits of Essence. 2 Chron. 2. 5, 6.

Secondly, His Eternity, whereby he is without all limits of beginning, succession, or end of Time. Psal. 102. 25, 26, 27. 1 Tim. 1. 17.

Q. What are those Attributes which shew what a manner of GOD he is?

A. His Qualities whereby he acteth with, are of two sorts.

First, His Faculties, whereby he is able to act. Isai. 60. 16, and 63. 1.

Secondly. His Vertues of those Faculties, whereby he is prompt and ready to act. Psal. 86. 5.

Q. What are his Faculties?

A. First, His Understanding, whereby he understandeth together, and at once all Truth. Job 4. 13. Acts 15. 18.

Secondly,

Secondly, His Will whereby he purely willeth all good. *Psal.* 119. 68.

Q. What are the Vertues of those Faculties?

A. First, They are intellectual, the vertues of his Understanding, as Wisdom, Knowledge, and the rest.

Secondly, Moral, the vertues of his Will, as Love, Holiness, Mercy. In the acting of both which, consists God's Happiness.

Thus much have you seen of God's sufficiency, in regard of his *Essence*. Now follows his *Subsistence*?

Q. What are his Subsistences or Persons?

A. That one most pure Essence with its Relative Properties.

Q. What are those Relative Properties?

A. They are three.

First, To beget.

Secondly, To be begotten.

Thirdly, To proceed from both.

Q. How many Persons learn you from hence to be in GOD?

A. Three :

First, The first, is the Father, the first Person in order, begetting the Son. *Psal.* 2. 7.

Secondly, The Son, the second Person, begotten of the Father. *John* 3. 16. *Heb.* 1. 3.

Thirdly, The Spirit, the third Person, proceeding from them both. *John* 15. 26.

Q. Are these three Persons three distinct GOD's?

A. No,

A. No, for they are that one pure Essence, and therefore but one God. *John* 1. 1. *Rom.* 9. 5. *2 Cor.* 6. 16. *1 Cor.* 2. 10.

Q. If every Person be GOD, how can they be distinct Persons, and not distinct GOD's?

A. Yes, Because one and the same thing may have many relative properties, and respects of being, which in the God-head make distinct Persons. As one and the same Man, may be a Father in one respect, a Master in another respect, and a Scholar in another respect.

Q. If these three Persons be but one GOD, what follows from hence?

A. That all the three Persons are Co-equal, Coeternal, subsisting in, not separating from each other, and therefore delighting in each other, glorifying each other. *Prov.* 8. 30.

Thus much concerning GOD.

Now concerning the Works of GOD.

Thus much concerning Gods Sufficiency, What is his Efficiency?

A. Whereby he worketh all things, and all in all things. *Rom.* 11. 36. *Isai.* 45. 7.

Q. What of GOD shines forth, and are you to behold in his Efficiency?

A. Two Things,

First, God's Omnipotency, in respect of his Essence.

Secondly, The co-operation and distinct manner of working of the three Persons, *Rom.* 1. 20, *John* 5. 17.

Q. What

Q. What is Gods omnipotency ?

A. It is his almighty power, whereby he is able to bring to pass all that he doth will, or whatever he can will or decree. *2 Chron. 20. 6. Phil. 3. 21. Mat. 3. 9. Psal. 115. 7.*

Q. What is GOD's Decree ?

A. It is his Eternal and determinate purpose, concerning the effecting of all things by his mighty power, according to his counsel. *Eph. 1. 11.*

Q. What attributes or glory of GOD appear in his Decree ?

A. First, His Constancy, whereby his Decree remains unchangeable. *Numb. 23. 19.*

Secondly, His Truth, whereby he delivereth nothing but what he hath decreed. *Jer. 10. 10.*

Thirdly, His Faithfulness, whereby he effecteth what ever he decreeth according thereunto *Isai. 46. 10.*

Q. What is GOD's Counsel ?

A. His deliberation, as it were for the best effecting of every thing according to his Wisdom. *Acts 4. 24. Psal. 104. 24.*

Q. What is GOD's Wisdom ?

A. It is the *Idæa* or perfect platform of all things in the mind of God, which either can be known, or shall be done, according to the good pleasure of his will. *Heb. 11. 3. Prov. 8. 12, 13.*

Q. What is the good Pleasure of GOD's will ?

A. It is the most free Act of his Will, whereby he willeth himself directly, as the greatest good, and all other things for himself, according to his

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his good pleasure. *Matth.* 11. 25. *Prov.* 16. 4.

Q. What learn you from hence?

A. That GOD's good pleasure is the first and best cause of all things. *Psal.* 115. 3. *Psal.* 33. 8, 9, 10, 11.

Q. What is the Co-operation of the three Persons in GOD's Efficiency?

A. Whereby they work the same thing together unseparably. *John* 5. 17, 19. and 16. 13, 14.

Q. If they work the same thing together, How is it that some works are attributed to GOD the Father? as Creation; some to the Son, as Redemption; some to the Holy Spirit, as Application?

A. This is not because the same work is not common to all the three Persons, but because that work is principally attributed in Scripture to that person whose distinct manner of working appears chiefly in the work.

Q. What is GOD the Fathers distinct manner of working?

A. His working is from Himself by the Son, and through the holy Ghost: *Psal.* 33. 6. *John* 1. 3: and hence the beginning, and so the Creation of all things is attributed to him.

Q. What is GOD the Sons manner of working?

A. His working is from the Father, by the holy Ghost; *John* 14. 16: and hence the Dispensation of all things, and so Redemption is attributed unto him.

Q. What is the Holy Ghosts manner of working?

A.

The SUM of

A. His working is from the Father and the Son ; *Joh.* 14. 26: and hence the Consummation of all things, and so Application is attributed unto him.

Q. Wherein doth GOD's Efficiency or working appear ?

A. In two Things.

First. In his Creation of the world.

Secondly, In his Providence over the world. *Isai.* 37. 16.

Q. What is his Creation ?

A. It is God's efficiency, whereby he made the whole world of nothing, originally exceeding good. *Psal.* 33. 9. *Gen.* 1. 31.

Q. Did the LORD make the world in an instant ?

A. No, but by parts, in the space of six days, described at large by *Moses.* *Gen.* 1.

Q. When did the LORD make the third heaven, with the Angels their inhabitants ?

A. In the first day, in the first beginning of it. *Gen.* 1. 1. *Joh.* 38. 6, 7.

Q. What is the Creation of the third heaven ?

A. Whereby he made it to be the heaven of heavens, a most glorious place, replenished with all pleasure which belongs to eternal happiness, wherein his Majesty is seen face to face, and therefore called the habitation of God. 2. *Chron.* 2. 5, 6. *Psal.* 16. 11. *Psal.* 63. 15.

Q. What is the creation of the Angels.

A. Whereby he created an innumerable number of them, in holiness, to be ministring spirits, with most acuteness of understanding, liberty of will, great strength, and speedy in motion, to
celebrate

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celebrate his praises, and execute his commands, specially to the heirs of salvation. *Heb.* 11. 22. *John* 8. 44. *Heb.* 1. 14. *2 Sam.* 14. 20. *Jude* 6. *2 Pet.* 2. 11. *Isai.* 6. 2. *Psal.* 130. 20.

Q. When did GOD create Man ?

A. The sixth day. *Gen.* 1. 27.

Q. How did GOD create Man ?

A. He made him a reasonable creature, consisting of body, and an immortal soul, in the image of God. *Gen.* 2. 7. *Gen.* 1. 28.

Q. What is the Image of GOD wherein he was made ?

A. That hability of man to resemble God, and wherein he was like unto God, in wisdom, holiness, righteousness, both in his nature, and in his government of himself and all creatures. *Col.* 3. 10. *Ephes.* 4. 24. *Gen.* 1. 26.

Q. What became of Man being thus made ?

A. He was placed in the Garden of Eden, as in his Princely Court, to live unto God, together with the Woman which God gave him. *Gen.* 2. 15.

Thus much of GOD's Creation.

Q. What is his Providence ?

A. Whereby he provideth for his creatures being made, even to the least circumstance. *Psal.* 145. 16. *Prov.* 16. 33.

Q. How is GOD's Providence distinguished ?

A. It is either, *First*, Ordinary, and mediate, whereby he provideth for his creatures by ordinary and usual means. *Hos.* 2. 22.

Secondly,

Secondly, Extraordinary and immediate, whereby he provides for his creatures by miracles, or immediately by himself. *Psal.* 36. 4. *Dan.*

3. 17.

Q. Wherein is GOD's Providence seen?

A. First, in Conservation, whereby he upholdeth things in their being and power of working. *Act.* 17. 28. *Psal.* 104. 29, 30. *Neb.* 9. 6.

Secondly, In Gubernation, whereby he guides, directs, and brings all creatures to their ends, *Psal.* 29. 10. *Psal.* 33. 11.

Q. Doth GOD govern all creatures alike?

A. No, But some he governs by a common providence, and others by a special providence, to wit, Angels and Men, to an eternal state of happiness in pleasing him, or of misery in displeasing him. *Deut.* 30. 15, 16.

Q. What of GOD's Providence appears in his special government of man?

A. Two things.

1. Man's Apostacy or fall.

2. His Recovery or rising again.

Q. Concerning Man's fall, what are you to observe therein?

A. Two things.

1. His transgression in eating the forbidden fruit. *Gen.* 2. 17.

2. The propagation of this unto all Adam's posterity.

Q. Was this so great a sin, to eat of the forbidden fruit?

A. Yes, exceeding great, this Tree being a
Sa-

Sacrament of the Covenant : also he had a special charge not to eat of it : and in it the whole man did strike against the whole law, even when God had so highly advanced him.

Q. What are the causes of this transgression ?

A. The blameless cause or occasion was the Law of God. *Rom. 5. 13.* And hence as the Law did it, so God did it ; holily, justly, and blamelessly. *Rom. 7. 10, 11, 12.*

Q. What are the blameable causes ?

A. Two principally ;

1. The Devil abusing the serpent to deceive the woman. *Gen. 3. 1.*

2. Man himself in abusing his own free-will, in receiving the temptation which he might have resisted. *Ephes. 7. 29.*

Q. What is the Devil ?

A. That great number of apostate and rebellious Angels, which through pride and blasphemy against God, and malice against Man became liars, and murderers of Man, by bringing him into that sin. *Luke. 11. 18. 1 Tim. 3. 6. 1 John 3. 12. John 8. 44.*

Q. What are the Effects and fruits of this transgression ?

A. They are two.

1. Guilt, whereby they are tied to undergo due punishment for the fault. *Rom. 3. 19.*

2. Punishment, which is the just anger of God upon them for the filth of sin. *Rom. 1. 18.*

Q. What are the particular punishments inflicted on the causes of this sin ?

A. Besides the fearful punishment of the devils, mentioned

mentioned *Jude* 6, and that of the serpent and the Woman, *Gen.* 3. 14, 16 ; the punishment of Man was, *First*, Sin Original and Actual, *Secondly*, Death. *Gen.* 5. 5.

Q. What, is sin ?

A. The Transgression of God's Law. Job. 3. 4.

Q. What is Original and Actual sin ?

A. First, Original sin is the contrariety of the whole nature of man to the law of God, whereby it being averse from all good, is enclined to all evil. *Eccles.* 8. 11. *Gen.* 6. 5. *Rom.* 6. 20.

Secondly, Actual sin is the continual jarring of the actions of man from the Law of God, by reason of Original sin, and so man hath no free will to any spiritual good. *Isai.* 65. 2, 3. *Jam.* 1. 14, 15. *Isai.* 1. 11.

Q. What Death is that which GOD inflicts on man for sin ?

A. A double death.

1. The *first* death of the body, together with the beginnings of it in this world, as grief, shame, losses, sicknesses. *Deut.* 28. 21, 22, 35.

2. The *second* death of the soul, which is the eternal separation and ejection of the soul after death, and soul and body after judgment, from God, into everlasting torments in hell.

Q. Is there no beginning of this death, as there is of the other in this life ?

A. Yes, as first, Security and Hardness of Heart, which cannot feel sin its greatest evil.

2. Terrors of Conscience. *Heb.* 2. 15.

3. Bondage of Satan. *Eph.* 2. 2.

4. The Curse of God in all blessings, whereby they are fitted for destruction, *Rom.* 9. 22. *Q.*

Q. What of GOD's attributes shine forth here ?

A. 1. His Holiness, whereby he being pure from all sin, cannot away with the least sin in the best of his creatures. *Heb. 1. 13.*

2. His Justice, whereby he being most Just in himself, cannot but punish man for sin, as well as reward him for well-doing. *2 Thes. 1. 6.*

3. His Patience, whereby he useth Pity, Patience, and Bounty, to his creatures offending. *Rom. 2. 3.*

Q. Is this sin, and the punishment of it derived to all men's Posterity ?

A. Yes, *John 3. 3. Eph. 2. 3.*

Q. How is it propagated ?

A. By the Imputation of Adam's sin unto us, and so the Punishment must needs follow upon it. *Rom. 5. 13.*

Q. Why should Adam's sin be imputed to all his posterity ?

A. Because we were in him as the members in the head, as children in his loins, as debtors in their surety, as branches in their roots : it being just, that as if he standing, all had stood, by imputation of his righteousness ; so he falling, all should fall, by the imputation of his sin.

Thus you have seen man's apostacy from God ;

Q. What is his recovery ?

A. It is the Return of man to the favour of God again, meerly out of favour, and the exceeding riches of his free grace. *Eph. 2. 12, 13. Rom. 5. 8.*

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Q. How

Q. How are we brought into Favour, and what are the Parts of this Recovery?

A. Two Ways.

First, By Redemption. 2 Cor. 5. 19, 20.

Secondly, By Application hereof. Tit. 3. 6.

Q. What is Redemption?

A. The Satisfaction made, or the Price paid to the Justice of God for the Life and Deliverance of Man out of the Captivity of Sin, Satan, and Death, by a Redeemer, according to the Covenant made between him and the Father. 1 Cor. 6. 20. Luk. 1. 74. Isai. 55. 10, 11.

Q. Who is this Redeemer?

A. Jesus Christ, God and Man. Mat. 1. 23. John 1. 14. Col. 2. 19.

Q. Why is he God-Man?

A. That so he might be a fit Mediator, to transact all Businesses between God and Man, in the Execution of his three Offices whereunto he was anointed of the Father. 1 Tim. 2. 5. Isai. 42. 12.

Q. What are those three Offices of Christ?

A. 1. His Prophetical Office, whereby he doth reveal the Will of the Father. Acts 3. 22. Colos. 2. 3.

2. His Priestly Office, whereby he makes full Atonement with the Father for us. Col. 1. 20.

3. His Kingly Office, whereby he governs his People whom he had taught and reconciled, subduing their Enemies, and procuring their eternal Peace. Psal. 2. 6. Isai. 9. 6.

Q. How hath Christ Jesus made satisfaction?

A. By

A. By his Humiliation, whereby he was made subject throughout his whole Life and Death, to the strict Justice of God, to perform whatever the same might require for the Redemption of Man. *Gal.* 4. 4, 5.

Q. What did God's Justice require of Man?

A. 1. Death, for the breach of the Law; and that Christ tasted, in his bitter Sufferings, both of Body and Soul, by being made Sin, and so abolishing Sin: and this is called his *Passive Obedience.* *Heb.* 2. 9. *Eph.* 1. 7. *2 Cor.* 5. 21. *Gal.* 3. 13.

2. Perfect Obedience in fulfilling the Law perfectly, both in his Nature and Actions, for the procuring and meriting of life: and this is called his *Active Obedience.* *Heb.* 7. 26.

Q. What follows Christ's Humiliation?

A. His Exaltation which is his glorious Victory, and open Triumph over all his and our Enemies, Sin, Satan, and Death, in the several Degrees of it. *Luk.* 24. 26. *Phil.* 2. 8, 9. *1 Cor.* 15. 5, 7.

Q. What is the first Degree of CHRIST's Exaltation?

A. His Resurrection the third Day, whereby his Soul and Body by the Power of the Godhead, were brought together again, and so rose again from Death, appearing to his Disciples for the Space of forty Days. *1 Cor.* 15. 4. *Joh.* 2. 19. *Acts.* 1. 3.

Q. What is the second Degree of CHRIST's Exaltation?

A. His Ascension into Heaven, which was the

the going up of the Manhood into the third Heaven, by the power of the God-head, from Mount Olivet, in the Sight of his Disciples. *Acts* 1. 11, 12.

Q. What is the third degree of his Exaltation?

A. His sitting at the right hand of God, whereby he being advanced to the Fulness of all Glory, in both Natures governeth and ruleth all things together with the Father, as Lord over all for the Good of his People. *Mark* 16. 9. *Pf.* 110. 1. *1 Cor.* 15. 25. *Eph.* 1. 20, 21, 22. *1 Pet.* 3. 22.

Q. What is the fourth and last Degree of his Exaltation?

A. His Return to Judgment, which is his second Coming into this World with great Glory and Majesty to judge the Quick and the Dead; to the Confusion of all them that would not have him rule over them, and to the unspeakable Good of his People. *Mat.* 19. 28. *2 Tim.* 4. 1. *Acts* 17. 31. *2 Thes.* 1. 7, 8, 9.

Thus much of Redemption, the first part of his Recovery.

Q. What is Application?

A. Whereby the Spirit by the Word and Ministry thereof, makes all that which Christ as Mediator hath done for the Church efficacious to the Church, as her own. *John* 16. 14. *Tit.* 3. 5, 6, 7. *John* 10. 16. *Rom.* 10. 14, 17. *Eph.* 5. 25, 26.

Q. What

Q. What is the Church?

A. The Number of God's Elect. *Heb.* 12. 23. *John* 17. 9, 10, 11. *John* 10. 16. *Eph.* 1. 22, 23.

Q. How doth the Spirit make Application to the Church?

A. 1. By Union of the Soul to Christ. *Phil.* 3. 9, 10.

2. By Communion of the Benefits of Christ to the Soul.

Q. What is this Union?

A. Whereby the Lord joining the Soul to Christ, makes it one Spirit with Christ, and so gives it Possession of Christ, and Right unto all the Benefits and Blessings of Christ. *1 Cor.* 6. 17. *John* 17. 21. *Rom.* 8. 32. *1 John* 5. 12.

Q. How doth the Spirit make this Union?

A. Two Ways.

1. By cutting off the Soul from the old *Adam*, or the wild Olive Tree, in the Work of Preparation. *Rom.* 11. 23, 24.

2. By putting or ingrafting the Soul into the second *Adam*, Christ Jesus, by the Work of Vocation. *Act.* 26. 18.

Q. What are the Parts of the Preparation of the Soul for Christ?

A. They are two ;

1. *Contrition*, whereby the Spirit immediately cuts off the Soul from its Security in Sin, by making it to mourn for it, and separating the Soul from it, as the greatest Evil. *Isa.* 61. 1, 3. *Jer.* 4. 3, 4. *Mat.* 11. 20, 28.

2. *Humiliation*, whereby the Spirit cuts the Soul

Soul off from Self-confidence in any Good it hath or doth ; Especially, by making it to feel its Want, and Unworthiness of Christ, and hence submitteth to be disposed of as God pleaseth. *Phil.* 3. 7, 8. *Luke* 16. 9. *Luke* 15. 17, 18, 19.

Q. What are the Parts of Vocation of the Soul to CHRIST.

A. 1. The Lord's Call and Invitation of the Soul to come to Christ, in the Revelation and Offer of Christ and his rich Grace. *2 Cor.* 5. 10.

2. The Receiving of Christ, or the Coming of the whole Soul out of it self unto Christ, for Christ, by Vertue of the irresistable Power of the Spirit in the Call : and this is Faith. *Jer.* 3. 22. *John* 6. 44. 45. *John* 10. 16. *Isai.* 55. 5.

Thus much of our Union :

Q. What is the Communion of CHRIST's Benefits unto the Soul ?

A. Whereby the Soul possessed with Christ, and right unto him, hath by the same Spirit Fruition of him, and all his Benefits. *Joh.* 4. 10, 14.

Q. What is the first of those Benefits we do enjoy from CHRIST ?

A. Justification, which is the gracious Sentence of God the Father, whereby for the Satisfaction of CHRIST, apprehended by Faith, and imputed to the faithful, he absolves them from the Guilt and Condemnation of all Sins, and accepts them as perfectly righteous to eternal Life. *Rom.* 3. 24, 25. *Rom.* 4. 6. 7, 8. *Rom.* 8. 33, 34.

Q. What Difference is there between Justification, and Sanctification ?

A.

A. 1. Justification is by Christ's Righteousness inherent in Christ only; Sanctification is by a Righteousness from CHRIST inherent in ourselves; 2 Cor. 5. 21. Phil. 3. 9.

2. Justification is perfected at once, and admits of no Degrees, because it is by Christ his perfect Righteousness; Sanctification is imperfect, being begun in this Life. Rev. 12. 1. Phil. 3. 12.

Q. What is the second Benefit next in order to Justification, which the Faithful receive from CHRIST?

A. Reconciliation, whereby a Christian justified is actually reconciled, and at Peace with God. Rom. 5. 1. Job. 2. 12; and hence follows his Peace with all Creatures.

Q. What is the third Benefit next unto Reconciliation?

A. Adoption, whereby the Lord accounts the Faithful his Sons, crowns them with Privileges of Sons, and gives them the Spirit of Adoption, the same Spirit which is in his only begotten Son. 1 Joh. 3. 2. Rom. 8. 11, 14, 15, 16, 17.

Q. What is the fourth Benefit next to Adoption?

A. Sanctification, whereby the Sons of God are renewed in the whole Man, unto the Image of their Heavenly Father in Christ Jesus; by Mortification, or their daily dying to Sin by Vertue of CHRIST's Death; and by Vivification, their daily rising to Newness of Life by Christ's Resurrection. 1 Thes. 5. 23. Ephes. 4. 24. Jer. 31. 32. Rom. 6. 7, 8.

Q. What follows from this Mortification and Vivification? *A.*

A. A Continual War and Combat between the renewed Part assisted by Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and the unrenewed Part assisted by Satan and this evil World. *Rom.* 7. 21, 22, 23.

Q. What is the fifth and last Benefit next unto Sanctification?

A. Glorification, which hath two Degrees, The one in this Life, and the other in the world to come.

Q. What is the first Degree of Glorification in this Life?

A. Lively Expectation of Glory, from the Assurance and shedding abroad God's Love in our Hearts, working Joy unspeakable. *Rom.* 5. 2, 5. *Tit.* 2. 13.

Q. What is the second Degree in the World to come?

A. Full Fruition of Glory, whereby being made compleat and perfect in Holiness, and Happiness, we enjoy all that Good, Eye hath not seen, nor Ear hath heard, in our Immediate and Eternal Communion with God in Christ. *Heb.* 12. 23. *1 Cor.* 15. 28.

Thus much of the *first* part, of living to God by Faith in God :

Q. What is the second Part, viz. our Obedience?

A. It is the Duty that is to be performed to God of us, through the Power of his Holy Spirit, working in us by Faith, according to the Will of God. *Eph.* 6. 6, 7. *Psal.* 139. 24. *Rom.* 6. 1. *Luk.* 1. 74. *Q.*

Q. Wherein consists our Observance of God?

A. It is either Moral, or Ceremonial.

Q. Wherein consists our Moral Observance of GOD?

A. In two Things :

1. In *suffering* his Will, whereby a Believer, for the Sake of Christ, chuseth rather to suffer any Misery, than to commit the least Sin. *Heb. 11. 26. Acts 21. 13.*

2. In *doing* his Will, whereby a Believer, in Sense of Christ's Love, performeth universal Obedience to the Law of God. *Rom. 7. 22. 1 Joh. 5. 3. Luk. 1. 6. Phil. 3. 12.*

Q. Is there any Use of the Law to a Christian?

A. Although it be abolished to a Christian in Christ, as a Covenant of Life ; (for so Adam and his Posterity are still under it) yet it remains as a Rule of Life, when he is in Christ, and to prepare the Heart for Christ. Rom. 6. 14, 15. Matth. 5. 17, 18, 19, 20. Ezek. 20. 11. Rom. 9.

Q. Why is not a Christian so under the Law as a Covenant of Life, so as if he breaks it by the least Sin he shall die for it ?

A. Because Jesus Christ hath kept it perfectly for him. Rom. 8. 3, 4. Rom. 5. 20, 21.

Q. Can any Man keep the Law perfectly in this Life ?

A. No, for the Unregenerate wanting the Spirit of Life, cannot perfect an Act of Life in Obedience to it : The regenerate having the Spirit but in Part, perform it only imperfectly. Rom. 8. 7. Rom. 7. 21.

D

Q. What

Q. What befalls the Unregenerate upon their Disobedience unto it ?

A. The eternal Curse of God for the least Sin, and the Increase of God's fierce and fearful secret Wrath as they increase in Sin. Galat. 3. 10. Rom. 2. 5.

Q. What befalls the Regenerate after their Breach of the Law, and imperfect Obedience unto it.

A. The Lord may threaten and correct them, but his Loving-kindness (in covering their Sins in their best Duties by Christ, and accepting their meanest Services so far as they are quickened by his Spirit) is never taken from them. Psal. 89. 31, 32, 33. Zach. 3. 1, to 8. Isa. 56. 7. Rom. 7. 20.

Q. What is that imperfect Obedience of Believers which is accepted ?

A. When they so observe the Will of Christ, as that therein,

1. They confess and lament their Sins. 1 John 1. 9. Rom. 7. 24.

2. They desire Mercy in the Blood of Christ, and more of his Spirit. Phil. 3. 9, 10, 11.

3. They return him the Praise of the least Ability to do his Will. Psal. 50. 23. 1 Cor. 15. 10.

Q. How is the Law, or ten Commandments divided ?

A. Into two Tables : The first, shewing our Duty to God immediately in the four first Commandments ; The second, our Duty to Man in the six last Commandments.

Q. What

Q. What Rules are you to observe to understand the Moral Law ?

A. These :

1. That in whatsoever Commandment, any Duty is enjoined, there the contrary Sin is forbidden ; and where any Sin is forbidden, there the contrary Duty is commanded.

2. That the Law is Spiritual ; and hence, requires not only outward, but inward and Spiritual Obedience.

3. Where any gross Sin is forbidden, there all the Signs, Degrees, Means, and Provocations to that Sin are forbidden also ; and are in God's Account that Sin : And so where any Duty is commanded, there all the Signs, Means and Provocations to that Duty, are commanded also.

4. That the Law is perfect ; and therefore there is no Sin in all the Scripture, but is forbidden in it ; nor no Duty required (if moral) but it is commanded in it.

Thus much of our *moral* Observance of God.

Q. What is our ceremonial Observance ?

A. The Celebration of the two Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Q. What is a Sacrament ?

A. It is an Holy Ceremony wherein external sensible Things, by the appointment of Christ are separate from common Use, to signify exhibit

bit and seal to us that Assurance of eternal Life by Christ Jesus, according to the Covenant of his Grace. *Gen. 17. 9, 10.*

Q. Which are the Sacraments ?

A. They are two, Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Q. What is the external sensible Part of Baptism ?

A. Water. John 3. 23.

Q. What is the inward and spiritual Part of Baptism, signified, exhibited, and sealed thereby ?

A. Christ's Righteousness and his Spirit.

1. Washing away our Sin, and so delivering us from Death.

2. Presenting us clear before the Father, and so restoring us again to Life. *Rom. 6. 4. Col. 2.*

12. *Mat. 3. 11.*

Q. What follows from hence ?

A. 1. That it is a Sacrament of our new Birth, and ingrafting into Christ. John 3. 5.

2. That as we are perfectly justified at once, and being new born once, shall never die again : Hence this Seal is to be Administred but once.

Q. What is the External and sensible Part of the Lord's Supper ?

A. Bread and Wine, with the Sacramental Actions about the same.

Q. What is the inward and spiritual Part of it signified, sealed, and exhibited thereby ?

A. The Body and Blood of Christ crucified, offered and given to nourish and Strengthen Believers, renewing their Faith unto eternal Life, 1 Cor. 11. 24. John 6. 54, 55.

Q. What

Q. What follows from hence ?

A. 1. That it is the Sacrament of our Growth in Christ, being new born ; because it is Food given to nourish us, having received Life.

2. That therefore it is to be administred and received often that we may grow.

3. That Children and Fools, and Wicked ought not to partake of the Sacrament, because they cannot examine themselves, and so renew their Faith. *1 Cor. 11. 28.*

Q. Ought not the Sacrament to be administred to carnal People, if they have been baptized ?

A. No, because such as are not within the Covenant, have no Right to the Seal of the Covenant.

Q. Where are Believers, who have Right unto this Sacrament, to seek Fruition of it ?

A. Because it ought not to be administred privately, (as the Papists would ;) Hence God's People are to seek to enjoy their Right to it in some particular visible Church, in joining with them, as Fellow Members of the same Body. *1 Cor. 11. 20, 22. 1 Chron. 10. 17. Acts. 2. 42.*

Q. What Members ought every particular visible Church to consist of ?

A. Christ being Head of every particular Church, and it his Body, hence none are to be Members of the Church but such as are Members of Christ by Faith. *1 Cor. 1. 2. 1 Thes. 1.*

Q. But do not Hypocrites, and no true Members of Christ creep in ?

A. Yes : But if they could have been known
to

to be such, they ought to be kept out ; and when they are known, they are orderly to be cast out. *Mat.* 25. 1. *2 Tim.* 3. 5. *Rev.* 2. 20. *Tit.* 3. 10.

Q. Are these Members bound only to cleave to Christ their Head by Faith ?

A. Yes, and to one another also by Brotherly Love ; which they are bound to strengthen and confirm, (as well as their Faith) by a solemn Covenant. *Eph.* 4. 15, 16. *Col.* 1. 4. *Jer.* 50. 4. *Isai.* 56. 45. *Zach.* 11. 14. *Zeph.* 3. 9. *Psal.* 119. 106.

Q. What Benefits are there by joining thus to a particular Church ?

A. 1. Hereby they come to be under the special Government of Christ in his Church, and the Officers thereof. *Isa.* 30. 20.

2. Hereby they have the Promise of special Blessing, and on their Children also. *Psal.* 133. 3. *Exod.* 20. 6.

3. Herein they have the Promise of God's special Presence.

1. Revealing unto them his Will. *Psal.* 27. 4. *Psal.* 63. 2, 3.

2. Protecting them. *Isa.* 44. 6.

3. Hearing all their Prayers. *Deut.* 4. 7. *Mat.* 18. 19.

Q. Are there not some who never find these Benefits ?

A. Yes : Because many knowing not how to make Use of God's Ordinances, nor feeling a need of God's Presence only in them, their Sin also blinding, and partly hardning their Hearts, and

and polluting God's House ; they then become worse when they have best Means. *Mat.* 11. 23. *Jer.* 17. 5, 6. *Heb.* 6. 8. *1 Sam.* 5. 8, 9. *Ezek.* 14. 4, 5. *1 King.* 8. 21.

Q. What are the Miseries of those who carelessly, and wilfully despise, and so refuse to join to GOD's Church ?

A. Besides the Loss of God's Presence in the Fellowship of his People, it is a fearful Sign (continuing so) that God never intends to save their Souls. *Acts* 2. 47. *Isai.* 60. 12. *Rev.* 2. 23, 24.

Q. What therefore ought People chiefly to labour for, and to hold forth unto the Church, that so they may be joined to it ?

A. A threefold Work :

1. Of *Humiliation*, under their Misery, Death, and Sin, as their greatest Evil. *Acts.* 2. 37. *Mat.* 3. 6.

2. Of *Vocation*, or their drawing to Christ out of this Misery, as to their greatest, and only Good. *Acts.* 2. 38, 41.

3. Of new *Obedience*, how they have walked in CHRIST since called. *Acts* 9. 26, 27. *Mat.* 3. 8.

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